



A Peek at USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Happenings in April

Important Dates to Remember

May 5 - Dairy Disaster Assistance Program signup ends

May 15-Aug. 1 - Primary nesting season

June 2 - Final loan/LDP availability date for various crops harvested in 2007

Public Comment Available on CRP Managed Haying and Grazing

FSA is accepting public comment on proposed changes to allowable frequencies of managed haying and grazing on CRP acres and changes to primary nesting season dates, during which managed haying and grazing is not permitted.

The proposed changes, if adopted, would apply to those lands enrolled in CRP after September 25, 2006 and existing CRP contracts where managed haying and grazing was not authorized prior to that date. For such lands in Montana, current managed haying and grazing frequencies are once in ten years for managed haying and once in five years for managed grazing. The primary nesting season is from May 15 – August 1. Montana's FSA State Committee determined that changes to the current program provisions were warranted. The proposed changes are to allow managed haying once in five years and managed grazing once in three years. The proposed primary nesting season dates are May 15 – July 15. The public now has the opportunity to comment on whether the proposed changes would be beneficial to wildlife and wildlife habitats on CRP acres in Montana.

Comments received will be considered for a state-specific environmental assessment that will evaluate the affects of the proposed changes in

Montana. Comments must be received by close of business on **April 19, 2008**. Comments may be mailed to: MHG EAs, Geo-Marine Incorporated, 2713 Magruder Blvd., Suite D, Hampton, VA 23666-1572 or by logging on to <http://public.geo-marine.com>. Separate comments may be submitted for each area of concern which includes: proposed action, proposed alternatives, water quality, wetlands, floodplains, sole source aquifers, wild and scenic rivers, wildlife, vegetation, threatened and endangered species, socioeconomic resources, cultural resources, air quality, hazard waster materials, and soil quality. Comments are not limited to the above alternatives. Other alternatives may be suggested.

2008 Managed Grazing Periods

The Farm Service Agency State Committee has approved two 60-day managed grazing periods for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres for 2008.

- Spring managed grazing can occur March 15th – May 14th
- Summer managed grazing can occur July 16th through September 13th

Since only two grazing periods are allowed, producers who can not begin grazing until August 2nd will only be allowed to graze through September 13th.

Wind Turbines or Oil/Gas Leases

If you have mortgaged your land to FSA approval is required prior to entering into wind turbines or oil/gas leases or development. Failure to obtain prior agency approval could result in loan default. Please check with the office if you are considering any of these options.